

## Message Text

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71

ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SAB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 /066 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/PAN:SMBELL/JFL

APPROVED BY S/AB:EBUNKER

ARA:HSHLAUDEMAN

NSC:DLAZAR

S/S - PSBRIDGES

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O 231939Z SEP 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 236526

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: ANOTHER UNFORTUNATE PANAMANIAN MANEUVER

REF: BELL/JORDEN TELECONS 9/23

1. THE NEXT-TO-LATEST OF PANAMA'S UNDERHANDED MANEUVERS  
IN THE NEGOTIATIONS -- DELIVERING A "CHRONOLOGY OF A  
DANGEROUS FLIP-FLOP" TO THE NEW YORK TIMES AND OTHER MEDIA  
REPRESENTATIVES -- APPEARS TO HAVE FLOPPED.

2. INSOFAR AS WE CAN TELL THE "CHRONOLOGY" HAS RECEIVED  
NO PLAY IN THE AMERICAN PRESS, THUS FAR AT LEAST.

3. THE LATEST MANEUVER IS FOREIGN MINISTER BOYD'S REPORTED  
STATEMENT TO A WASHINGTON POST REPORTER THAT "IT WOULDN'T  
SURPRISE ME IF FORD MIGHT BE LOOKING FOR A MAYAGUEZ INCI-  
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DENT (IN PANAMA) TO ALLOW HIM TO EXHIBIT HIS MACHISMO...

THAT MIGHT PERMIT HIM TO CAPTURE THE SUPPORT HE WILL NEED" TO BE ELECTED. THE TEXT OF THE JOANNE OMANG STORY, DATE-LINED PANAMA CITY SEPTEMBER 22 AND PRINTED ON SEPTEMBER 23, IS BEING SENT TO YOU SEPARATELY.

4. YOU SHOULD ADVISE THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT AT THE LEVEL YOU JUDGE APPROPRIATE THAT WE HAVE GREAT DIFFICULTY IN BELIEVING THAT THE MINISTER WAS QUOTED CORRECTLY. CLEARLY A SUGGESTION THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD SEEK TURMOIL ABROAD FOR POLITICAL ADVANTAGE AT HOME WOULD BE AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE CHARGE AGAINST THE CHIEF OF A FRIENDLY STATE. IT WOULD ALSO CONSTITUTE A BLATANT INTRUSION INTO THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE UNITED STATES. AS SUCH, IT COULD NOT BUT CALL INTO SOME QUESTION -- PARTICULARLY WHEN TAKEN TOGETHER WITH THE "CHRONOLOGY" MANEUVER -- WHETHER PANAMA SERIOUSLY DESIRES TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATING WITH THE UNITED STATES.

5. WE WILL NEED YOUR REPORT, COMMENTS AND ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS QUICKLY. AS YOU CAN APPRECIATE, THIS MANEUVER ALSO CALLS INTO QUESTION THE WISDOM OF THE VARIOUS MEASURES WE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSING FOR MANAGING THE PANAMA PROBLEM IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

6. MINISTER BELL CALLED IN THE PANAMANIAN CHARGE AT 11:30 THIS MORNING (SEPTEMBER 23) TO MAKEPLAINOUR DISMAY AND TO ASK FOR AN IMMEDIATE "CLARIFICATION" BY HIS GOVERNMENT. ROBINSON

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## Message Attributes

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